

## **Livestock Emergency Response System (LEDERS) Update Spring 2008**

June 12, 2008

To Members of the Nebraska Livestock Disease Emergency System Veterinary Corps:

The Nebraska Department of Agriculture is enthusiastically preparing for the 2008 LEDRS Conference on August 5 and 6 at the Holiday Inn in Kearney. The agenda and registration forms for the 2008 LEDRS Conference have been e-mailed and are available on the web site. Please bring your LEDRS Identification badge with you to the Conference (it has your picture on it). We will be creating new badges for those who need one. Activities to prepare the Volunteer Veterinary Corps include foreign animal disease training, and operational Responder Team, and PPE exercises/instruction. Veterinarians from all specialties are encouraged to participate. Recruit your colleagues, and tell them this is “summer camp for the FAD responder”! Search “LEDERS” at [www.agr.ne.gov](http://www.agr.ne.gov) or check [www.agr.ne.gov/division/bai/ledrs.htm](http://www.agr.ne.gov/division/bai/ledrs.htm) for information and an application to join.

Several Foot-and-Mouth Disease Regional Table Top Exercises held in Nebraska this year have successfully trained first responders and uncovered gaps in preparedness. Multiple Nebraska counties collaborated on a regional basis to test their local response in accomplishing the mission of surveillance, containment, and eradication. First responders participating in the discussion-based exercise were given a scenario of the emergency disease outbreak, and asked to solve the questions of “what, who, and how.” Local emergency management staff simulated deployment of local resources to assist the Nebraska Department of Agriculture in the event of an actual occurrence. Multi-county exercises have been completed in Valentine, Wisner, and Columbus, and an exercise is scheduled for June 28 in Hallam. Several LEDRS veterinarians and other private practitioners supported their county by contributing guidance on the emergency plan and disease control. The Overview attached to this message was one of the training resources used in preparing the responders for the exercise.

Dr. Del Wilmot, Deputy State Veterinarian, partnered with the Nebraska Game and Parks and several public health entities to present Avian Influenza Rapid Response Training to a variety of public health, emergency management, and agricultural responders. The training included information on avian influenzas in poultry and wild birds, as well as the public health aspects of community surveillance and response. It emphasized the interdependence of human and animal health. This multidisciplinary approach, most recently referred to as “One Medicine,” involves transmission as well as surveillance of disease. Animals often serve as sentinels for human disease. Conversation about this one disease provided the opportune moment to remind the audience about emerging diseases, with the same interrelationships. Several Nebraska locations hosted the training and it received positive reviews.

The Nebraska Department of Agriculture is participating in a National Veterinary Stockpile Working Group. The federal National Veterinary Stockpile (NVS) is modeled after the Strategic National Stockpile which is intended for public health emergencies. The NVS exists to augment local and state resources primarily in the fight against 17 of the most damaging animal diseases affecting human health and the economy. The NVS provides for rapid delivery of critical veterinary supplies, personal protective equipment and animal vaccines. The purpose of the Working Group is to review and revise several NVS documents including the NVS Planning Guide for Federal, State and Local Authorities. Through this process, our Department has gained further insight into the processes and procedures which will assist in the development of plans to receive and utilize the federal assistance.

NDA is an active participant in the Multi-State Partnership for Security in Agriculture. The Partnership, a coalition of 13 Midwest States, has received Department of Homeland Security funds to continue its mission to collaborate, share information, and prevent duplication of effort between states on agriculture emergency preparedness and response initiatives. Future projects include the development of emergency task-specific training, exercises to coordinate public information from all partners, and policy meetings to clarify sources of funding in emergency declarations.

As part of the Livestock Emergency Disease Response System (LEDRS), a small group of LEDRS veterinarians serve as "Sentinel Clinics." These veterinarians, strategically located throughout the state, participate in twice monthly conference calls with the State Veterinarian, Dr. Dennis Hughes, and NDA staff. They serve as sentinels to share information, identify trends, and provide early recognition for emerging and foreign animal diseases. As they consult with their colleagues, they remind the profession to include foreign animal diseases on the list of differential diagnoses along with endemic diseases.

We look forward to seeing you in August at the LEDRS Conference. Feel free to contact Dr. Janice Mogan, Agriculture Homeland Security Veterinarian for additional Homeland Security information - [janice.mogan@nebraska.gov](mailto:janice.mogan@nebraska.gov), or (402) 471-6806.

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